

CLAYTON PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING
Monday, February 2, 2009
The Center of Clayton - Multipurpose Room A

The following members were present:

Alex Berger	Robert Kerr
Ira Berkowitz	Eric Schneider
Mimi Deem	Mark Winnings
Rosemary Hardy	

Excused/Absent

Judy Goodman
Dick Hyde
Omri Praiss

Also present:

Patty DeForrest, Director of Parks and Recreation
Eric Gruenenfelder, Superintendant of Recreation

Approval of the Minutes

The minutes were approved as submitted.

Director's Report

Ms. DeForrest reported that the hockey tournament held at Shaw Park Ice Rink went very well. The fans enjoyed it and the Mid-State Hockey organization is interested in planning this event again next year and in future years.

We completed the Fitness Center renovations. Our members are very happy with the changes. The Fitness Center has new flooring and state of the art weight training equipment. It is a wonderful improvement and everything went as planned.

Ms. DeForrest stated that she attended a meeting with BJC/OASIS and a few other entities to discuss outreach, wellness and healthcare related programs for the community. This is an aspect of programming we are currently not touching on and nine years ago when we opened it was part of our plan to offer more programs such as breast health screenings and blood drives. Mayor Goldstein and Mr. Gerdelman from the CRSWC also attend this important meeting.

Quarterly budgets for Parks & Recreation will now be available for the Commission. The reports are categorized by expenses and revenues. In the Parks and Recreation department not a lot takes place in the first three months because fall and winter are slower times of the year. The first part of the report denotes the general fund. Ms. DeForrest reported on this fund in detail at the January meeting. The following budgetary information notes how things are going in various departments within the Park and Recreation department. The administrative part of the budget is full-time staff expenses so there is no revenue associated with this portion of the report. The season pass line for Shaw Park Aquatic Center (SPAC) will make budget. A percentage of the Platinum passes we sell go into this account and these passes are sold throughout the year. We had a stellar pool season. We expect the ice rink line to be over budget. The rental revenue at the rink is down because it was closed two years ago and we do not have as many hockey teams using the rink for practices and games. The expenses at the rink are nothing out of the ordinary. The Hanley House has begun generating revenue for the first time in a long time. We are having more tours and programs continue to increase at the house. Staff is working with a consultant on the tennis center project. We are looking at late August or early September to begin this work. Hopefully, the design will be completed by the end of February. The project will include tearing out the old surface and installing new courts. The sports department is projecting to make budget. Currently, the fitness department has generated \$93,000 in revenue from Boot Camp. This is a contractual program and 75% of the revenue goes to the contractor. The park maintenance department does not generate revenue. We are saving money in this account due to a staff vacancy. The department is operating without a Field Technician staff person. The job opening closes on February 20 and the hope is to have an employee in the position by March 1. City Manager, Craig Owens, asked that we look at the pricing strategy at Shaw Park Concession stand in order to generate revenue. In order to do so we may consider increasing the cost of some items.

Capital budget - Rec and Stormwater account was also discussed. Ms. DeForrest noted it does not do a whole lot of good to compare this account to last year's budget. There is a decrease in sales tax revenue which means staff has to be slightly cautious about these projects as it is the primary source for funding.

There was a very brief discussion about the potential of capping non-resident memberships at the outdoor pool to prevent overcrowding. Ms. DeForrest noted that on some weekends, especially if the weather is great, we can have anywhere from 1,800-2,000 people per day. It is important to keep in mind though that people come and go throughout the day so these members are not all there at one time.

Mr. Gruenfelder conducted a presentation about the potential of additional shade at SPAC around the children's pool. In the Master Plan survey additional shade at the pool was rated high by members of the community. Mr. Gruenfelder's presentation included detailed slides that showed how shade at the pool has increased over the years. In 2004 shade was added by the dock and the children's pool. In 2006 shade was added on the other side of the children's pool and this area can be rented for free during the day. This shaded area is not utilized very much so new usages will be explored to make it more useful. In 2007 three umbrellas were added by the concession area. A proposal has been made to add 4 new shade structures around the children's pool. Photographs were shown so everyone could see what the area would look like if the structures were added. Ms. DeForrest noted it was a bit difficult to see exactly how the blue and yellow umbrellas would actually look at the site. Mr. Gruenfelder and Ms. DeForrest informed everyone that the blue umbrellas are not removable and the yellow ones are movable, which means they can be moved around depending on how the sun is hitting the pool. The deck will have to be dug into to install the structures. After discussing shade options and placement of the umbrellas at length the following motion was made: Mr. Robert Kerr made a motion to move forward with the original plan and proposal to install two blue and two yellow shade structures around the children's pool for the estimated cost of \$36,400 (the total cost includes shipping and installation) - the blue umbrellas cost \$14,000 and the yellow umbrellas are \$21,000. Mr. Winnings seconded the motion. Mr. Berkowitz and Mr. Schneider opposed the proposal.

Project Matrix

Ms. DeForrest discussed the uses of the project matrix in length including the fact that it is intended to be used to evaluate projects, specifically those contained within the Master Plan. She also distributed the matrixes to the Commission (please refer to these documents for additional details.) The concepts of seven different components were utilized to create the categories. In each category the project is evaluated and points are assigned to it. This process takes the guess work out of determining the importance of various projects. Further, the results show how if funding is received for a project it can move ahead and be placed in the budget. Ms. DeForrest provided examples of how the matrix works by using certain projects listed in the Master Plan. She also stated the importance of the tool and noted that certain changes had been made to the matrix after discussion with the City Manager. Mr. Schneider said that he does not think this is a useful tool and had concerns over its use. Ms. DeForrest then mentioned it is very possible to tweak it along the way. Also, she noted the matrix has been tested on various projects and it is extremely useful. Ms. Hoagland stated that she thinks the matrix is an elegant tool. During further discussion it was stated that the matrix will not be the determining factor for everything; it is a useful tool to look at projects and will help us determine what projects we should consider. The other step will be to bring in new projects, test them and then create a column to evaluate the total cost of the project. The Commission was in favor of its usage, with further consideration throughout the budget process.

Old Business / New Business

Ms. DeForrest was asked if she would like a Chairman to be appointed. She said she would be really like for the commission to have a Chairman and that is how it is stated in the charter. She then explained that if any of the members knew of anyone or if they themselves wanted to be the Chairman they should contact the BOA representatives on the Commission. The BOA appoints the Chairman for the Commission.

Ms. Hardy told everyone about her trip to the Oakland House in Affton. The house was built in 1853 and is very stately. Nancy Ulrich, the woman who works at the house has been on the board there for many years and has served in many different capacities. The kitchen is inside the house which is unusual for the time. Nancy told Ms. Hardy historical houses definitely need endowments to survive.

Ms. Hardy also talked about the property at the old Maryland School site and how Washington University may purchase the site and sell it to a developer. She stated it would be a great opportunity for the Commission to talk to the city and the BOA to let them know we would like for them to purchase at least a portion of the land and use it to enhance Hanley Park.

Ms. DeForrest stated that we are looking at infrastructure money from the stimulus package. Mostly the funds will be used for roads and transportation; however there is some funding for historic preservation.

Respectfully submitted by:
Denise Ucinski